

Amendment to the Claims

Listing of Claims

This listing of claims shall replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A method for improving the toughness of a CBN product made by a high temperature/high pressure (HP/HT) process, which comprises the steps of:

forming a blend of an oxygen getter and CBN product-forming feedstock, wherein the oxygen getter is selected from the group consisting of titanium, aluminum, silicon and mixtures thereof; and

subjecting said blend to a CBN high temperature/high pressure (HP/HT) process for forming a CBN product, wherein said HP/HT process is conducted in the presence of a catalyst;

wherein the amount of oxygen getter in said blend is sufficient to improve the toughness of said CBN product and wherein the amount of oxygen getter in the blend is between about 0.005 and 0.5 wt %; and

wherein the CBN product has an oxygen content of less than about 300 ppm.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said oxygen getter comprises a material selected from the group consisting of elemental Al, Si, and Ti, nitrides of Al, Si, and Ti, carbides of Al, Si, and Ti, and mixtures thereof.

3-8. (Cancelled)

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said HP/HT process is conducted in the presence of a catalyst devoid of oxygen content.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said oxygen getter is removed from said CBN product.

12-14 (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) A CBN product formed by the a process of claim 1 comprising:

~~forming a blend of an oxygen getter and a CBN product-forming feedstock; and~~

~~subjecting the blend to a high temperature/high pressure (HP/HT) process to form a CBN product; and~~

~~wherein the CBN product has an oxygen content of less than about 300 ppm.~~

16-22. (Cancelled)

23. (Currently Amended) A method for improving the toughness of a CBN product made by a high temperature/high pressure (HP/HT) process, which comprises the steps of:

forming a blend of an oxygen getter and a CBN product-forming feedstock, wherein the oxygen getter comprises titanium; and

subjecting said blend to a CBN high temperature/high pressure (HP/HT) process for forming a CBN product, wherein said HP/HT process is conducted in the presence of a catalyst;

wherein the amount of oxygen getter in said blend is sufficient to improve the toughness of said CBN product and wherein the amount of oxygen getter in the blend is between about 0.005 and 0.5 wt %; and

wherein the CBN product has an oxygen content of less than about 300 ppm.

24-25. (Cancelled)

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 23, wherein the ~~oxygen-getter~~  
~~further comprises a material~~ titanium is selected from the ~~group consisting of elemental Al and~~  
~~Si, nitrides of Al and Si, carbides of Al and Si, and mixtures thereof~~ elemental titanium, nitrides  
of titanium, carbides of titanium, and mixtures thereof.

27. (Cancelled)

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the HP/HT process is  
conducted in the presence of a catalyst devoid of oxygen content.